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FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN OUR SCHOOLS. PART ONE, CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS. PART TWO, RESEARCH, METHODS, AND MEASUREMENT. PART THREE, SOLVING PROBLEMS.

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THIS 3-PART RESEARCH REPORT DISCUSSES SYSTEMATICALLY THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES, ANALYZES THE PROBLEMS THAT FACE SCHOOLS, AND OFFERS SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING PROGRAMS. AFTER REVIEWING THE HISTORICAL FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NEW EMPHASIS BEING PUT ON LANGUAGES, PART ONE SUMMARIZES SUCH DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS AS THE AUDIOLINGUAL METHOD, LANGUAGE LABORATORIES, LONGER SEQUENCES OF STUDY, FLES, AND NDEA LANGUAGE AND AREA CENTERS AND OTHER PROGRAMS. INCLUDED IN PART TWO ARE AN EXPLORATION OF CRITICAL REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS, AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER, A COMPARISON AND EVALUATION OF NEW AND OLD METHODOLOGIES, AND AN EXPLORATION OF THEORIES AND REALITIES IN SELECTION AND MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES. PART THREE CONCENTRATES PRIMARILY ON THE SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND THE ALLIED NECESSITY OF MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY, BUT ALSO COMMENTS ON THE PROBLEMS OF BILINGUALISM, LONGER STUDY SEQUENCE, AND PROGRAM ARTICULATION AND PLANNING. BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHIES ARE APPENDED TO EACH SECTION OF THE REPORT. (AB)

research report

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TO: Guidance Service Subscribers

FROM: Mildred McQueen, Research Editor

RE: FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN OUR SCHOOLS

(*PART ONE*–CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS)

In recent years foreign language enrollments have increased at all school levels and there have been many new developments. This is the first report in a three-part series that will discuss these developments, analyze the problems that face schools, and offer some suggestions for improving programs.

HISTORY OF CHANGES

Recent developments in the foreign language field and the new emphasis that is being put upon languages have resulted from several factors. One important factor is that we now live, as it is often said, in one world, and there is almost instant communication between all parts of this world. For a long time Americans have had some knowledge of the Western world, but now it is just as important that we have knowledge and understanding of the non-Western countries. Although knowing the language of another country will not bring complete understanding of its culture, communication between people will foster such understanding. Therefore educators think it is important for Americans to speak the languages of other peoples. In addition, new developments in linguistics and psychology have brought changes to the foreign language field. About twelve years ago language instruction came under the close scrutiny of the Modern Language Association, and the results clearly indicated that modern languages needed to be taught more effectively (6). A few years later, provisions for modern foreign language development were included in the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Since then, many changes have been made in modern language curricula. The new approaches have broken sharply with the traditional system. Schools have adopted the changes and new methods, and the government is supporting them. However, as Politzer points out, the change in the methods and aims of the foreign language curriculum was shaped primarily by forces that were outside the field of language teaching and education as such (10). Here is a brief history:

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- During the nineteenth century the foreign language curriculum was based firmly on a belief in logical universal grammar and the psychological doctrine of formal discipline (10). But around the beginning of the twentieth century foreign language instruction lost this firm foundation. The real attack on universal grammar, like that on formal discipline, came as the result of the investigations of anthropologically oriented linguists. They found that universal logical categories hindered rather than helped them in trying to analyze a language and determine its structure. Thus, during the 1920s and '30s foreign language education in the United States was in a state of confusion, and its purposes were not clear. Although some language teachers were concerned, society as a whole was not interested.

- World War II was the catalyst that brought about a sudden reversal in attitudes toward language education (10). It was during this time that the new knowledge about subject matter from scientific linguistics and about learning theories from educational psychology made their impact upon foreign language instruction. The first impact came in an area in which foreign language teaching had no background of traditional experience that might have slowed down the innovators. With the war effort it became a necessity to teach foreign languages, such as Arabic, Hindi, and Japanese, that had not been part of the curriculum, and also to teach American English as a foreign language–which was necessary because the United States became a center to which military personnel and then students from other countries came. Linguists were recruited to write the materials and to conduct the courses for these new teaching situations, and they brought to the task the opinions, skills, and methods of their learning and experience.

- In analyzing the great influence of the linguists on language instruction, Politzer says it is important to distinguish between the *what* and the *how* of the teaching process (10). In the matter of what to teach, the linguists have made contributions in two areas: (1) linguistic description has made clear certain facts about language–

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for example, analysis of intonation–that could not be described before; and (2) comparative analysis of the language to be learned and the native language of the student can indicate the exact points of conflict and their difficulty. Therefore the linguist can tell the language teacher where to put the emphasis in the course. But the linguists have also strongly influenced the *how* of the teaching process. It must be kept in mind that they are concerned not only with describing languages but also with developing "discovery procedures." Linguistics implies a specific way of learning a language in a specific situation of anthropological fieldwork. Because of the nature of the situation, the linguistic fieldworker learns the language of the area and of his informants through an audio-lingual process. Although the goal of the learning process is eventually to reduce the informant's language to writing, oral communication is the starting point. The linguist must find out about the grammar of the language by an analytic comparison of the words and conversation of the native speaker. As the linguist analyzes the language, he also learns about the culture of the people. This relation between language and culture and the cultural goal of language learning have also become important in foreign language education.

• The psychological foundation of the foreign language curriculum, according to Politzer, has made its impact because of the influence of the linguistic scientist. American linguistic science has been behavioristic in its approach. This psychological orientation is confirmed by the insistence that the object of language study must be an observable speech act. In their teaching methods, linguists found it easy to adopt a viewpoint that analyzes the learning process mainly as habit formation, reinforcement of correct responses, and so on. Emphasis on repetition, immediate rewards for correct responses, and the use of language laboratories are some of the results of this viewpoint of language learning.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS

There is no doubt that the audio-lingual method of language teaching, now so much in vogue, stems from the linguistic type of language teaching that was initiated during World War II. As Simpson points out, the Army Specialized Training Program dramatized the method and objective of this kind of language teaching and, in fact, furnished the pattern for the Foreign Language Institutes sponsored by the National Defense Education Act (12). This act has implemented the "new language" and has made a tremendous impact on U.S. schools at all levels. In summarizing present developments and trends, Simpson discusses new features of foreign language programs including the development of the science of linguistics. Other features are: agreement that language is essentially speech, and presumably oral speech; recognition of the need of longer sequences if effective oral competence is to be achieved, and consequent pressure to introduce foreign languages in the elementary grades; the contributions of psychological research, with its emphasis on childhood as the natural period for language learning; the use of electronic devices or language laboratories; and a realization and admission of the utilitarian value of foreign language, as witnessed in the emphasis on the relation between foreign languages and international understanding in the Area Studies of the National Defense Education Act. Here is a further discussion of some of these trends and developments:

The New Method. The audio-lingual, or aural-oral, method stresses the teaching of language through listening and speaking (6). It is believed that this emphasis more effectively paves the way for acquiring reading and writing skills than the former traditional approach. After a student acquires the ability to comprehend spontaneous speech of a language and to respond spontaneously, he can then be introduced to the language in a more functional manner. In discussing basic principles of the new method, Leibowitz and Sherman list four basic steps in language learning: recognition, imitation, repetition, and variation (7). Recognition, of course, involves listening repeatedly to speakers fluent in the language, either in person or on tapes or records. This listening leads to recognition and in time to imitation. Repetition guarantees that a word or phrase will become part of the student's usable knowledge of the new language. Variation encourages the student, guided by the teacher, to use and understand other phrases or expressions, similar to the model ones he has been repeating; these may be basic grammatical variations, such as forming a plural or substituting one word for another. Thus the methods of "pattern" practice (substitution, transformational exercises, etc.) are mainly the discovery procedures of the linguistic scientist converted into teaching techniques for the classroom. The new foreign language instructional materials are designed to emphasize these four basic steps in language learning. They usually include visual materials such as filmstrips and flash cards, audio materials such as tape recordings and review records, and testing materials such as unit quizzes and grading charts.

Language Laboratories. Many schools have language laboratories, with special booths where students can practice language skills privately. In effective programs, the laboratory work is carefully correlated with regular classroom activities (6). One of the first attempts to use this method, according to Bumpass, was in 1947 when Louisiana State University built a modified language laboratory as part of their language program (2). Title III of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 gave impetus to the spread of the new method and by 1962 there were 5000 language laboratories in U.S. high schools, double the number estimated for the preceding year and 78 times the number of such installations in 1957-58. Although

estimates of the number of laboratories now in use varies, one writer estimates that they are used in about 10,000 U.S. high schools (2). Obtaining an exact figure is difficult because some schools designate various kinds of audio-lingual facilities as laboratories, while others may consider that only a complex facility with individual student booths and a master control booth with fingertip control is really a language laboratory. Specialists in language state that the language laboratory can contribute to language learning by facilitating active simultaneous participation of all students in a class in both listening and listening-speaking practice; by providing a variety of authentic native voices as consistent and untiring models for student practice; by freeing the teacher from the task of presenting repetitive drill practice; and by giving him a chance to correct the performance of individual students without interrupting the work of others. A recent national survey obtained responses from nearly 300 high school foreign language directors and teachers who gave their opinions on the value of language laboratories in several categories and also for some special kinds of students (2). They overwhelmingly indicated that the supplementary and enrichment use of the lab had improved their students' pronunciation, intonation, oral facility, and understanding of the spoken language. In fact, over 85 percent of the respondents felt that language laboratories had a beneficial effect on their students. The remaining respondents felt there was no improvement or they had not used the method long enough to form an opinion. Over three-fourths of the respondents noted an increase in motivation for learning a foreign language. As to the lab's use in working with special types of students, about three-fourths of the teachers and directors felt it was a wonderful innovation for the gifted and for shy students, and a little more than half of them felt it had helped them with remedial work. A collection of comments of all those surveyed gave insight into problem areas where improvements might be made.

Longer Sequence for Mastery. All foreign language specialists agree that there is a need for longer sequences if proficiency in any given language is to be achieved. Some students are having an opportunity to study languages in longer sequence. Hart, in discussing modern foreign languages, states that in some schools instruction starts in the third or fourth grade, thus increasing the period of instruction to nine or ten years (6). There are examples, too, in the educational literature of high schools with advanced college-level classes in one or more modern foreign languages. For instance, beginning in 1964, fifth-level German, French, and Spanish were offered to qualified high school students in the Gary, Indiana, schools (4). However, although some schools have progressed toward the longer sequence, many high schools still offer only two years of a foreign language. And even when a high school student's program includes three or four years of a foreign language, it is quite common to find that the time is divided between two different foreign languages. Yet the consensus of foreign language teachers is that two years are quite insufficient to achieve anything even approaching mastery. In addition to a longer sequence, authorities also agree that an uninterrupted sequence, once a foreign language is started, produces the best results (7).

Foreign Languages in the Elementary School. Foreign language in the elementary school, or FLES, is a recent innovation in education (12). There is a good deal of activity. Young children in many areas are learning French and Spanish and there is even considerable interest in Russian, supported somewhat by the availability of TV courses in that language. Locke states that preadolescent children learn easily by imitation and that the best time to start one or more languages is in the elementary school (8). He doubts that anyone who has taught one or more foreign languages at that level, as he has, would debate the statement. However, as Simpson points out, it is a fallacy to assume that since childhood is the natural time for learning languages, foreign languages must remain forever closed to postchildhood students (12). Simpson says observation shows that adults who are motivated and have acquired purposeful study habits can progress much faster than children. What children do better is imitate sounds, because their speech habits have not become fixed. They also have more patience with repetition. What adults do not achieve is "accent," but for the practical objectives of the general population this lack is no barrier to communication. Despite the acceptance of the soundness of FLES as an idea and general approval by many educators, parents, and children, some educators are opposed to the introduction of foreign languages in the elementary school. In addition, although some programs have had excellent results, others, for a variety of reasons, have not been effective (11). Nonetheless, most specialists believe that although adults can progress rapidly in learning foreign languages, the best age to learn them is childhood and early youth, when imitative powers are greatest and when the organs of speech are flexible and adaptable.

NDEA Language and Area Centers and Other Programs. Thirty years ago studies of "exotic" or uncommon languages were almost nonexistent, and those who learned languages such as Chinese, Arabic, and Swahili were a very small minority (3). But even then, some scholars were concerned with the lack of non-Western studies and challenged universities to overcome this neglect. When World War II altered perspectives, challenge became demand, and the concept of language and area studies developed rapidly. By the middle of the 1950s there were a few of these programs on American campuses. Both their importance and the need for immediate strengthening of language learning were recognized by Congress in its enactment of Title VI of the National Defense Education

Act (NDEA). During the 1965-66 academic year, 98 languages and area centers in 61 colleges and universities received nearly $5 million of federal support under Title VI. And every dollar of federal aid for new or expanded activities had to be matched by a dollar of university funds. The critically needed modern foreign languages form the crux of the centers program. Professional linguists helped the Office of Education make the selection. Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian made up the first priority group. Later, Latin-American Spanish was added to this critical list. Although these seven modern foreign languages are those identified as essential to our national interest and are still the most important, 77 more languages make up other priority groups. Instruction in all modern foreign languages except French, German, and Italian may be supported under the NDEA Language and Area Centers Program (9). Now these centers cover 11 major world areas in which American students learn the languages of the area and study the cultures of the countries. The task of the language and area center is to blend the content and substance of several university departments into related sets of courses that focus on a particular region of the world. A report from the State Department tells what the American maker of foreign policy faces today. He must not only know what the anthropologist, linguist, and social scientist have to say about a region, but he must also know what the economist, political scientist, and historian can tell him. For example, the Middle East is one of many regions studied under the Title VI program, and Iran is just one of the countries within it. Flapan, in discussing the centers, describes what a Middle Eastern affairs specialist should be (3). He must acquire basic competence in modern standard Arabic–the language of newspapers, radio newscasts, formal speeches, and letters in the Arab world. Then he must add a conversational form of the language. If he has a special interest, he will also acquire basic competence in modern Turkish, the standard Persian of Tehran, or modern Israeli Hebrew. When such studies as literature, history, political science, anthropology, geography, economics, law, arts, sociology, education, and business are added to languages, the concept of the language and area center becomes clear. In addition to giving support to language and area centers, NDEA's Title VI has provided leadership and incentive to modern foreign languages in a number of other ways (1). It has supported language institutes for elementary and secondary school teachers, provided fellowships for advanced students, and underwritten research projects. Although the institutes for teachers are the most self-contained program of the four, all the programs are related at several points. In 1958, before federal support, there were 3071 enrollments (the number of students would be less) in uncommon languages in institutes of higher education, according to the Modern Language Association (3). Students had a choice of fewer than 35 languages and many of these had five enrollments or fewer. Today, it is estimated that over 13,000 are enrolled in uncommon languages at the 98 NDEA-supported centers alone and 80 uncommon languages are studied. A good example of how a large center combines all levels of students is seen at the East Asian Language and Area Center at Columbia University. College sophomores and juniors can take general courses in the major civilizations of Asia; undergraduates can also major in Oriental studies with emphasis on the appropriate language. After the student receives his B.A., he can take regional work for his master's degree and continue his language studies. If he becomes a Ph.D. candidate, he will be able to do specialized research. With some adaptations, a smaller undergraduate college can also offer special training for a student within the framework of his B.A. It may offer a minimum of two years of an uncommon language and some study of the area. Portland State College, with its Middle East Studies Center, is an example. Thus, the leadership of the centers is apparent at both graduate and undergraduate levels and often at secondary levels as well. A number of language and area centers have helped nearby secondary schools to inaugurate new language instruction.

In spite of new developments and definite progress, it is evident there are problems in some areas. The next report will discuss some of the criticisms of research and methods.

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research report

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TO: Guidance Service Subscribers

FROM: Mildred McQueen, Research Editor

RE: FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN OUR SCHOOLS

(*PART TWO*–RESEARCH, METHODS, AND MEASUREMENT)

The first report in this series traced the history of foreign language instruction and summarized recent developments. This second report will discuss questions that have arisen about research, new methods, and programs.

REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS

Recently foreign language programs have come under fire, not only from the traditionalists but from former supporters of the new developments (16). Some critics say that we have striven to attain a fast command of foreign languages and have found that speedier learning does not compensate for superficiality of comprehension (13). Other critics question the way language laboratories are used and say teachers are not properly prepared to use them. Still others are disturbed about the lack of basic research in foreign language teaching methods (14). Some say the reformation has come from without and that the reformers do not care for learning and cultural values but are interested only in practical values. As noted previously, Politzer makes a strong point of the fact that the changes and aims of the foreign language curriculum were shaped mainly by forces outside the field of language teaching and education (10). This is not surprising or improper, because the curriculum always reflects changes in our society. At the same time, however, the great impact that linguistics, social pressures, and some learning theories have had on the foreign language curriculum raises the question of the role of the foreign language teacher and educator. The linguistic scientist–in this case the subject-matter specialist–can tell the educator what to teach, but to what extent are his teaching methods really the best? Politzer raises some other questions. Is there evidence that language contributes to cultural understanding and, if it does, just what kind of instruction makes this contribution? If international communication is the goal of language instruction, should we not keep in mind that it is almost impossible to predict which language students will need to know? And the impossibility of making such a prediction raises the question that is at the heart of the matter. Instead of, or at least in addition to, teaching one particular language, is it possible to teach in such a way that the student learns a method or concepts that will help him to acquire another language if he has a future need for it? As Politzer notes, the curriculum reform in foreign languages has taken a different course from reforms in other curricula. Although each subject field has distinct characteristics and it may not be possible to teach foreign languages with more emphasis on concepts, research should be conducted to find out. The answers to the questions can be found through research by teachers and educators who know how to use the contributions of linguistics and psychology to build their curriculum (10).

RESEARCH AND THEORY

The Language Development Program of the National Defense Education Act initiates research, studies, and surveys, and creates specialized materials to improve instruction in modern foreign languages. Reports that list and describe these various research projects are issued periodically (17). Although several significant studies have come out of the program, Carroll believes that there has been too little use of the provided funds for basic research in foreign language teaching methods (14). One reason for this is a shortage of qualified research workers interested in this field. In addition, many educators are skeptical about the possibility of doing research that can make a significant difference in the conduct of foreign language programs. One reason given, not only about foreign language research but about all educational research, is that it is often so abstract that its results are difficult to apply in any practical way. Carroll admits there is some basis for objections, but he still thinks valid research can be useful and workable. He and others have analyzed some of the problems involved in research on foreign language programs and have made some suggestions. Here is a summary:

- One way of getting at the problem of the role of research in foreign language teaching is to find out who are the potential "consumers" of research results (14). One of these is the teacher. There are two types of teachers that may make the wise use of research results difficult. One is the standpat traditionalist who is

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satisfied he is doing the best that can be done and shuns any intrusion of research results. The other is the "impressionable adventurer," as Carroll calls him, who is willing to try out anything, especially if it is new or in fashion. Within this group is the teacher who goes overboard about gadgets and all kinds of hardware. Carroll hopes that the majority of teachers would fall somewhere between these two extremes. This hoped-for majority group would have faith in the soundness of their own teaching techniques, but they would also be open-minded and interested in new ideas and materials that come from research and willing to try out some of the results in their classrooms. The results easiest to try out in class are the texts, films, teaching machine programs, and other materials in which research findings are already incorporated. Next in order are the gadgets or hardware that have been designed to make these materials more available to students. Another kind of research result that can be quickly applied in the classroom is one that shows what kind of text or other teaching material is best for a certain purpose. The kind of research result most difficult for the teacher to apply is the one that shows the effectiveness of a certain teaching procedure that the teacher must use in a consistent way in a teaching session. Evidently teachers often have difficulty changing their behavior on the basis of research findings.

- The teacher trainer should be an avid consumer of educational research, especially when it gives information on what teaching methods are most effective. The best time to persuade teachers to use these methods is when they are first being trained.

- The educational policymaker is also a consumer of educational research. He has to have certain information on which to base decisions. In foreign language teaching, he needs information about such questions as the best age to begin study of a foreign language and how long instruction should last to achieve mastery.

- There is still another type of educational research consumer: the producer, originator, or author of teaching materials. He needs research results relating to content and the most effective way to organize materials of instruction. However, Carroll believes that the textbook writer who carefully searches for the answers to such questions and then applies them effectively in developing his materials is quite rare (14). There is a great amount of research on improving instructional films, for instance, but film producers have not made enough use of the findings. There is a serious problem in organizing and communicating research results so that they can be plainly understood and applied by the producers and authors of materials.

In fact, there is a problem of communication between the researchers and all research consumers. It is difficult for the researcher to reach his audience. Usually his research results are published in a journal that his potential consumers may not see or even know about. One solution to the problem of getting research to the consumer would be to have an educational liaison person who made personal visits to school people and producers of instructional materials to communicate findings. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of people qualified to do this kind of work and those available are needed as teachers and researchers. Also, the research results might not be thought clear and definite enough to provide the liaison person with a solid product to sell. Although some useful studies have been and are being conducted, some of them come under the heading of laboratory, rather than classroom, research. For example, a group of psychologists at Stanford University who call themselves "mathematical learning theorists" have been able to propose exact equations for the rate at which material is learned or forgotten (19). Professor Patrick Suppes is trying to apply these equations to problems in foreign language learning. Whatever the final outcome of this study, it may be relevant to language learning because of the great volume of material to be learned. Because of the eventual usefulness of such studies, Carroll urges strong support for theoretical research in learning even though practical results for the classroom may not be immediately available (14). Although we know a good deal about learning, Carroll and other specialists say we do not yet have a good general learning theory concerning the conditions under which learning takes place and we do not have a general theory of language behavior that would enable educators to select the components of a foreign language program for a given situation. A study of the methods used by teachers and of the writing of linguists and foreign language educators indicates that there are two major theories of foreign language learning, and thus two teaching methods. Although some studies have been conducted on the two methods, there is no *proven* theory of foreign language learning.

COMPARISON OF METHODS

Recently there have been several critical articles about some features of the audio-lingual method. Unfavorable opinions stress the slowness and monotony of oral drills, the overemphasis on memorization and mimicry, and so on. There has now been time for foreign language specialists to consider the criticism, to compare the new method with the old, and to make some suggestions:

- Hawley believes that the reaction against the audio-lingual method is not only inevitable but also desirable (16). At first, some school people felt the new method possessed some magic quality and that the language laboratory and the drills would provide for student mastery of the patterns of the language without any work with the grammatical principles on which the language

was based. Now almost all workers in the field recognize that these assumptions are false and should be pleased that such fallacies are being recognized. But there is also a danger in the present criticism. Hawley fears that the pendulum may now swing to the other extreme, rather than stop in the middle and bring about a synthesis of the relatively new audio-lingual method and the traditional one. He is concerned that many teachers who favor the traditional method and who always have been suspicious of the audio-lingual techniques may now discard them completely and go back to the old ways. In searching for a synthesis, he says it is well to repeat a maxim that has not been repeated often enough: The learning of a foreign language is the acquisition of a skill–that is, if we are discussing active knowledge, both written and oral, of the language. It is a highly complex and difficult skill, but a skill none the less, and any skill must be practiced. It is always useful, even necessary, for the student to understand the rules he is practicing if he is to get the greatest benefit from the drill, but it is useless to give so much class time to explanations of rules of grammar that there is little time left for practicing the rules. These ideas should be kept in mind when criticisms of the audio-lingual method are considered. Hawley discusses these criticisms, refuting some points and making suggestions about others (16). For example, one criticism is that the audio-lingual method places a great strain on the teacher. But no complex and difficult skill can be learned without the expenditure of a great deal of time and effort by both teacher and pupil. No method or combination of methods will change this. Another criticism is that other skills are neglected because of the concentration on oral work. Hawley agrees that more opportunity to write can be given students, but says teachers should keep in mind that to write is to record the spoken word by means of symbols. If the student has mastered the patterns of the spoken language, then learning the symbols for the commonly taught languages is not a major task. The pattern drills are criticized, too, as slow and monotonous. Drills can be made less monotonous by varying them with different types of exercises–translation, for instance. Translation, if it is translation *into* the foreign language, is one kind of practice, and it should have a place in foreign language teaching. But it should not take the place of the varied drills that are included in good adaptations of the audio-lingual method. There is a certain amount of monotony in any learning. In summing up the criticism and making a strong case for a synthesis, Hawley states that if there is a complete return to the old methods, many of the gains that language study has made during the last ten years will be lost.

• Carroll also discusses the two methods, cites a study that compares them, and describes the two theories on which they are based (14). The audio-lingual habit theory, as he calls it, is the theory of the reformers and has three main ideas: (1) since speech is primary and writing secondary, habits to be learned must be learned first as auditory and speech responses; (2) habits must be automatized as much as possible so that they can be called forth without conscious attention; and (3) this automation of habits occurs chiefly by practice or repetition. Thus, the audio-lingual habit theory has led to practices in language teaching such as the laboratory, the structural drill, and the mimicry-memorization technique. The cognitive code-learning theory, which Carroll says is a modified, up-to-date grammar-translation theory, places more importance on the learner's understanding of the structure of the foreign language than on his facility in using the structure. It is believed that if the student has a proper degree of cognitive control over the structure, then facility will develop automatically with use. Although the two theories represent rather fundamental differences in teaching method and style, some teachers make use of both theories in planning teaching procedures. An experimental comparison of two teaching methods, one based on the audio-lingual habit theory and the other on the cognitive code-learning theory, was made by a research team with two groups of students at the University of Colorado. The complete results of this experiment on the teaching of German at the college level are available in a published book (18). In general, the average differences between the two groups were small, small enough to suggest that it makes no difference whether the audio-lingual or traditional method is used. Carroll comments that perhaps good teaching was the variable that kept both groups up to a fairly high standard. Also this kind of research is hard to control. For example, it is almost impossible to control the techniques the student himself will adopt to acquire a language skill. He may use techniques, on his own, from both methods. Although more research is needed, Carroll points out that neither the audio-lingual habit theory nor the cognitive code-learning theory makes use of a body of knowledge that has grown up about verbal learning. It is known, for instance, that the frequency with which an item is practiced is not as important as the frequency with which it is contrasted with other items. Therefore learning items in practice drills would be improved if there were a continous alternation of items instead of mere repetition. It is also known that the more meaningful the material to be learned, the greater the facility in learning and retaining it. But the audio-lingual habit theory plays down meaningfulness in favor of automatic action. Another factor is that materials presented visually are more easily learned than similar materials presented aurally. Although the goal of teaching may be the attainment of mastery in listening and speaking, any adequate theory for learning a language should take account of how the student handles visual symbols of the auditory elements. In addition, it is often true that conscious attention to, and an understanding of, the features of a skill will promote learning. This

principle is largely ignored in the audio-lingual theory, but it is recognized by the cognitive code-learning theory. Carroll believes that these principles, derived from learning theories, could make a contribution to more effective language teaching. He says the audio-lingual habit theory is no longer abreast of recent developments. Like Hawley, he thinks it is time for a major revision, especially in the direction of joining with it some of the better elements of the cognitive code-learning theory. If this can be accomplished, the teaching of foreign languages will be much more effective.

SELECTION AND MEASUREMENT

Both the measurement of a student's capacity to learn a language and the measurement of his achievement are areas in which there are problems and some disagreements among specialists. It seems clear that students attracted to language courses vary greatly in this capacity (1). However, there have been certain commonly held fallacies about language learning and one of these, now discarded, was the attitude that languages can be learned only by near geniuses. Simpson says that anyone with a mental age of more than two can and does learn any language to which he has sufficient exposure (12). But this does not nullify the concept that various students differ in the capacity to do so. Here is a discussion of the ideas and findings on language ability and testing:

- Some data have been obtained on the relation of language aptitude to intelligence. Using an experimental version of the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT), developed by Carroll and Sapon in 1959, Gardner and Lambert found that language aptitude was factorially similar to intelligence as defined by two verbal subtests of the American Council Psychological Examination (ACE). However, the researchers say the finding may be spurious because the factor matrix also contained many measures of attitudes and motivation that, because of their low correlations with the aptitude and intelligence variables, could artificially enhance the similarity (15). What is obviously needed is a study relating language aptitude to a multifactor measure of intelligence to allow for a clearer definition of the specific intellectual variables (if any) actually related to language aptitude. Although Carroll has shown that numerous abilities make up an aptitude for language, little research has been done to relate these abilities to specific second-language skills. In a recent study Gardner and Lambert have tried to clarify the relation of intelligence to language aptitude and second-language achievement and to delineate the specific second-language skills associated with language-learning abilities (15). They found that measures of intelligence are relatively independent of both language aptitude and second-language achievement and, moreover, that different second-language skills are related to different abilities. For example, the ability to code auditory phonetic material in such a way that it can be recognized and remembered longer than a few seconds, upon which complete vocabulary knowledge depends, is not specific to oral-aural skills or dependent upon a passive rote-learning ability, but rather upon a higher cognitive skill in which the individual actively seeks to impose a meaningful code on the material.

- The Office of Education researchers, who surveyed the area summer programs, state that a close relation probably exists between articulateness in one's mother tongue and control of a foreign language (1). In the area programs, placement tests, some of which may seem perfunctory but are nonetheless effective, are used for transfer students. In addition to placement tests, most instructors use a combination of procedures to place students in the right courses: tests for comprehension that may include translation of target language into English; tests for pronunciation that include analysis of student recordings; and so on.

- The Chinese tests developed under Carroll's direction and the Russian tests now being developed under MLA auspices open up the prospects of nationwide testing (1). Various voices have arisen in criticism of nationwide tests, but the step would improve the tests and various means of improving courses would be suggested.

There are other areas in foreign language programs about which critics have made suggestions. These will be discussed in the final report.

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research report

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TO: Guidance Service Subscribers

FROM: Mildred McQueen, Research Editor

RE: FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN OUR SCHOOLS

(*PART THREE*–SOLVING PROBLEMS)

The first two reports in this series described recent developments in foreign language programs, analyzed some of the problems related to research and methods, and made some suggestions. This final report will discuss problems related to teachers, language laboratories, and other areas, and offer further suggestions for improved programs.

TEACHERS, TRAINING, AND LANGUAGE LABORATORIES

A major problem in planning improved foreign language programs is a shortage of well-qualified language teachers (21). The need for more trained teachers exists at all levels. Here is a discussion:

• At the university level good language teachers have always been scarce, according to Bigelow and Legters, because the prestige value is low, the monotony high, and the particular abilities rare (1). But some way must be found to make language teaching more attractive and there must be more effort to recruit the teachers the country needs. For example, in the case of the uncommon languages, the problem may become acute unless American students can and will master the uncommon languages to the point where they can form the next generation of language teachers. Although there is evidence that some students are training for such a career, the trend is neither as rapid nor numerically as strong as it should be. However, the Office of Education is hopeful about the undergraduate programs inspired by the language and area centers. These programs, by reaching a wider range of students earlier, may prove to be a major factor in solving the problem (1).

• There is general agreement on the qualifications of secondary school foreign language teachers, and the Modern Language Association of America has developed criteria and defined the skills needed by high school as well as elementary school teachers (24). Although high schools have accepted the criteria and tried to adapt to new developments, Hallman says a lag exists because some teacher-training institutions are clinging to archaic methods (5). Modern foreign language programs demand a teacher who has a solid linguistics background, an understanding of the nature of the language and the nature of the learner, and a command of ways and means by which the subject matter can be transferred to the learner. Hallman makes some suggestions for revising teacher-preparatory programs. He is concerned not only with the quality and quantity of the language courses but also with the future teacher's general education. The teacher needs a liberal education that gives him a broad foundation. In the field of specialization, the training program should provide students with the opportunity to acquire basic language skills–understanding or listening comprehension of the new tongue, speaking ability, reading ability involving the acquisition of a passive vocabulary in excess of that used in speaking, and writing ability. There should be emphasis on these skills prior to professional training. In addition to these, the future teacher should study the structural differences between the foreign tongue and English and should learn about the foreign culture. Courses in applied linguistics, phonetics, contemporary culture, and cultural anthropology are recommended. The teacher should also receive training in the psychology of language learning and practical classroom procedures. These should include techniques of teaching audio-lingual skills and reading and writing, means of testing and evaluating language skills, and effective use of electromechanical aids. Hallman emphasizes that because good control of the language is so important, evaluation of the student's proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing should take place before allowing him to go into student teaching. This proficiency check could also take place before his acceptance into the professional training program. Although the NDEA language institutes are attempting to fill the gap between teacher-training programs and high school classrooms, colleges and universities must evaluate and improve their programs so that tomorrow's teachers will have sound qualifications when they begin teaching.

• The chief problem in initiating foreign language pro-

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grams in elementary schools is the fact that teachers lack the facility with modern languages that is necessary to teach them effectively. Hart says a few schools are fortunate enough to have language specialists as teachers, and others base their instruction on TV or film presentations (6). Still others have language laboratories, although there are no figures available on how many there are (8).

Closely related to the need for improved teacher training is the effective use of the language laboratory. The greatest obstacle to its effectiveness is the lack of teachers with special training. Although other criticisms have been made, this is the one most often mentioned. Here is a summary of opinions and surveys:

- The serious shortage of teachers trained to use the language laboratory was documented by a poll of state supervisors of foreign language teaching (23). When asked to specify the most serious handicap to the success of the lab, they overwhelmingly named "the teachers' lack of special training." Another survey, cited previously, showed the need for more trained teachers who understand and appreciate the potential of the language lab (2). When the language laboratory first appeared, some school people felt it would be almost self-propelled; but it required both new methods and new materials, and these did not appear until several years later. True, since 1959 the NDEA institutes have enrolled more then 17,000 language teachers in programs designed to retrain them, and the use of the laboratory is always included. It might be expected that nearly half of the teachers would now be expert users. But this is not the case. The annual turnover of at least 10 percent makes the task of retraining an endless one. In addition, the seven-week institute must cover half a dozen subjects and there is not time to develop the skills of the expert in any of them. According to Donald D. Walsh, who made an official evaluation of the 1961 NDEA institutes, use of the language laboratory and linguistics are among the least well learned (23). Teacher orientation to the language lab involves two objectives. First, the teacher must understand the function of the laboratory and its potential value. There must be instruction in the types of electromechanical devices and materials available, and in their coordination with the entire language program. Second, the teacher must be able to operate and maintain a laboratory.

- Two other weaknesses, often mentioned in surveys, are that schools need more textbooks to coordinate work with tapes, and more films in the foreign language area. Specialists say an extreme need exists for more films and filmstrips (2). Also in many cases improvement is needed in the quality and durability of equipment in laboratories so that work will not be interrupted by so many minor difficulties and breakdowns.

Bumpass predicts that the near future will bring a higher-quality, better-planned, and more complete type of language laboratory (2). He also believes the installation and use of language labs will continue to spread during the next ten years and that by 1975 most high schools will be using them as supplementary and enrichment activity for their foreign language students. Overall, Bumpass believes that our need for improved foreign language instruction will soon be partially relieved. Hocking and Blickenstaff say that nationally the teacher-training situation is probably improving slowly, because of general criticism and pressure and in particular because of the new Tests of Proficiency for Teachers and Advanced Students of the Modern Language Association (23). These new tests, excluding all use of English, include specific measures of the four skills: hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. The increasing use of these tests by educational institutions and state agencies will slowly compel teacher-training colleges to improve training. In the meantime, here are some suggestions that can help schools:

- The intelligent use of tape recordings can help solve the problem of the shortage of qualified teachers (12). Those who have observed present conditions, especially in the elementary school, often draw negative conclusions about the possibility of pupils learning a foreign language because of the teacher's lack of training. However, it has been demonstrated that a teacher knowing no foreign language can teach one by the diligent use of tape recordings. The teacher usually will need in-service aid and the guidance of a specialist, with whom he practices until high competence is reached. Then he plays the tapes in class, mimicking the sounds and leading the pupils in repeating the items. The teacher must stay within the framework of each lesson; he can make a great number of variations of the items included but must allow himself no impulsive additions. Simpson says it should not need to be stressed that the teacher, as he works in this way, should plan and carry out a program for self-improvement (12). An excellent guide for his program is the chart prepared by the Modern Language Association Research Program. This is different from the usual statement of professional standards. The MLA chart gives several stages in each category so that the teacher can determine his present rating and look forward to progressive steps in improvement. Although some administrators are against including foreign languages in elementary school, many others believe that administrators must accept the necessity of FLES as an obligation of a school system responsive to public needs. Some critics say programs are spotty and languages are often dropped before high school. But this argument seems spurious when we know that the reason programs are spotty or languages are dropped is simply that foreign languages have not been made an integral and sequential part of the elementary school program. As for the argument that foreign languages make added demands on an overcrowded curricu-

lum and on teacher supply, this argument can be answered by making the classroom teacher responsible for foreign language as for other instruction and including it in suitable "slots" during the day. Simpson suggests two fifteen-minute periods (ten minutes for primary children) morning and afternoon. The guiding principle would be intensive practice on small amounts of material in diversified ways. If such study began in kindergarten, the number of content words might be 50. Planned increments for succeeding years could be 50 words for the first grade and 100 for the second, third, fourth, and fifth. The only new part of this suggestion is that foreign language be recognized as a part of the elementary curriculum, taught by the classroom teacher, like arithmetic or reading. The plan in no way negates the need for improved teacher training. Continued advance is essential.

• Suggestions for helping teachers who do not know how to use language laboratories include in-service meetings, instruction by a representative of the manufacturers, and attendance at NDEA institutes (2). For administrators who are seeking ways to solve the problem, help is available. The most recent and comprehensive aids for language laboratory orientation are eight fifteen-minute films produced by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction under the auspices of NDEA. Each film is planned to serve as the core for a lecture-demonstration-discussion session. Hocking and Blickenstaff say these sessions will not solve all problems, however, because the teacher needs actual practice in operating and maintaining the laboratory (23). Manual experience can best be attained in supervised practice groups of two or three persons. Once teachers know how to use the language laboratory, they should be given enough free time to plan lab instruction.

A SUGGESTED BREAKTHROUGH

There should be continued study and experimentation with foreign language methods and materials so that additional improvements can be made. However, Andersson says we also need to see and plan our next advance (20). The progress represented by the audio-lingual approach, the proper use of the language laboratory, TV, and programed self-instruction is important, but it is in another area that we could have a major new advance in language learning. Already educators are giving more attention to the bilingual child and see the importance of solving the problems of those children whose first language is not English. In this area, Andersson believes, there is an opportunity for a real breakthrough. A recent report of the Office of Education estimates that there are some 19 million native speakers of European languages other than English in the United States, or 11 percent of our population. The figure would be higher if it included speakers of all other languages. We probably have speakers of fifty languages, not only the well-known European ones such as Italian. Spanish, German, Polish, and French, but also such languages as Eskimo (in Alaska), Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, Visayan, Tagalog, and Portuguese (in Hawaii), and more than a dozen American Indian and Asian languages. It is a matter of professional and national interest for us to preserve these languages and to provide their speakers with an education that takes them into account. In this vital undertaking modern foreign language teachers have an important part to play, but they need the help of other educators and social scientists. Andersson cites what he calls "seven deadly sins" in foreign language programs that bilingual education could help eliminate (20). Among these are the almost useless two-year sequence of language study in our high schools; a too late start; the absence in many communities of public kindergarten and nursery schools where young children could begin to learn foreign languages; and the fact that some schools are concerned exclusively with grammar, reading, and writing. Although the value of these aspects should not be underestimated, teachers who understand the process of language learning believe that the learning of speech should precede that of writing, especially for the young learners. Other faults are our failure to hire well-qualified native-speaking teachers of foreign languages when they are available, and our inflexible credit-counting education of teachers. Certification should not be a substitute for qualification, especially now that we have the MLA Foreign Language Proficiency Test for Teachers and Advanced Students to help us measure objectively. The last fault is the failure of schools to encourage Spanish-speaking (or other non-English-speaking) children to speak their mother tongue, and to respect the culture of which they are representatives. As Gaarder points out, the federal government encourages a large expenditure annually for language development in both the common and "neglected" languages, but no part of the effort is directed to the further development of those same languages in the more than one in ten Americans who already have a measure of native competence in them (22). Gaarder's discussion assumes that whether the bilingualism of a child is to be a strong asset or a negative factor in his life depends on the education he receives in both languages. Both Andersson and Gaarder make several suggestions and describe plans for schools that can strengthen and maintain the mother tongue of the bilingual child. (The entire issue of the *Modern Language Journal* in which their discussions appear is devoted to a symposium about bilingualism and will be helpful to those schools that enroll bilingual children.) Research suggests the effectiveness of using the child's mother tongue to begin his formal schooling. Andersson uses Spanish as an example and suggests that throughout the period of schooling a reasonable amount of time each day should be reserved for Spanish so that the child can steadily increase his proficiency not only in speaking, reading, writing, and grammar but also in understanding his literature and culture. Since the average

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Spanish-speaking child will know little or no English when he starts school, he should be introduced to it very gradually. Andersson says there need be no concern about his eventual capacity to speak English and he will have many opportunities to hear it. As soon as he is ready, perhaps in the second grade, he should begin to receive instruction in English, and this should steadily increase. Gaarder suggests basic plans for bilingual schools designed to develop bilingualism in children whose mother tongue is English as well as in those who speak some other mother tongue. Basic to any two-language development program is the need to reinforce the non-English ethnic group's self-image as speakers of their native language. There is much informal evidence, usually subjective, to confirm the belief that bilingualism acquired by natural means facilitates the learning of a third language. Aside from bilingual learning, some evidence indicates, too, that experience in learning one foreign language plus general linguistic knowledge may enable students with strong motivation to master whatever new language is required of them (12). This is an area in which more research should be done, since it would give more substance and future usefulness to the learning of a language. Once we have learned how to plan and manage the education of bilinguals, Andersson believes, the principles can be applied to language education in general (20). A new emphasis on the bilingual child can make an important contribution.

SUMMARY FOR IMPROVING PROGRAMS

The success of the overall foreign language program in our schools depends to a great extent on the smooth and continuous transition of instruction from one level to another. This continuity is at once a challenge and a problem, and only a few schools have achieved it. It is not so difficult to initiate a program of instruction in learning a second language in the elementary grades. But it is more difficult, according to Seine and Gelms, to plan and implement the sequences that must follow (25). They suggest four keys or areas upon which the success or mediocrity of a foreign language program depends. These are teaching staff, the purpose and nature of the curriculum, instructional materials, and the purpose and type of evaluation. There must be overall planning of all levels of instruction. The articulation from elementary to secondary school can be smoothed if one basic fact is recognized. The elementary foreign language program is required of all students, and its philosophy reflects this commitment. The secondary program, however, is an elective one and ruled by expanded objectives: cultural enrichment, linguistic exploration, college requirements. Although the two curricula differ in this way, there are basic considerations of continuity and knowledge accumulation that are essential to both programs. Use of similar or sequential series of textbooks and materials for the two programs will do much toward promoting good continuity. The problems of instructional continuity must be solved by working from the lower grades up rather than by filtering down. Although the recommendations that Seine and Gelms make in various areas may take time to implement, they are goals toward which to aim. Overall, the future for foreign language instruction in the United States is encouraging, but there are unsolved problems. The degree to which these problems are solved will determine whether the burgeoning language movement will develop into maturity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

There are many sources to which school people can turn for help and guidance in planning foreign language programs, including the NDEA institutes, the National Societies of Teachers of Foreign Languages, the Department of Foreign Languages of the NEA, the Foreign Language Program of the Modern Language Association of America, and the U.S. Office of Education. In addition to the references in the bibliography, each issue of the *Modern Language Journal* contains helpful articles. Also useful for those who need to know more about language teaching and language laboratories are *Language Laboratory and Language Learning,* by Elton Hocking (Department of Audiovisual Instruction, NEA, 1964), and *Language Laboratory and Modern Language Teaching,* by Edward M. Stack (Oxford University Press, 1960). Those who want more information about the language research program may write to the Language Section, Research Branch, Division of Higher Education Research, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202. For further information on the language and area centers program, write to the Language and Area Centers Section, Language Development Branch, Division of College and University Assistance, U.S. Office of Education.

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